

Troops to Teachers available to Reserve Components!

“ America’s school children need you”.

Laura Bush, First Lady of the United States

The worst teacher shortage ever is now cooking according to the National Education Association. Nationwide, some 2.4 million teachers will be needed in the next 11 years because of teacher attrition and retirement and increased student enrollment. The greatest teaching shortages are in bilingual and special education, mathematics, science, computer science, English-as-a-Second-Language, and foreign language.

In high-poverty urban and rural districts alone, more than 700, 000 new teachers will be needed in the next 10 years. About 42 percent of all public schools in the United States have no minority teachers. The percentage of minority teachers is expected to shrink to an all-time low of 5 percent, while 41 percent of American students will be minorities.

The Troops to Teachers (TTT) program is designed to recruit quality teachers for schools serving low income families and relieve teacher shortages, primarily in Math, Science and Special Education. It is funded by the U.S. Department of Education and administered by the Department of Defense through the Defense Activity for Non Traditional Education Support (DANTES). Since 1994 TTT has provided monetary and guidance support to qualified Active Component service members. Since January 2002, the program has been open to members of the Reserve Components.

There are four qualifying options to RC members who possess a Baccalaureate from an accredited institution or have one year of college with 6 years experience in a vocational or technical field:

RC-1. Retired from the drilling reserves with 20 or more years on or after 1 Oct 99. Must apply within 4 years of retirement.

RC-2. Currently serving in the drilling reserves with 10 or more years of creditable service and commit to serving an additional three years or until eligible for retirement.

RC-3. Retired or separated from the drilling reserves due to a physical disability on or after 8 Jan 02. Must apply within 4 years of separation.

RC-4. Service members transitioning from active duty on or after 8 Jan 02 with 6 or more years of active duty immediately prior to separation and a commitment to serve three years with a drilling reserve unit. Must apply within four years of separation.

Pending availability of funds, eligible individuals may receive up to \$5K to offset teacher certification expenses and an additional \$5K bonus if they teach in a school serving a high percentage of students from low income families. Other benefits offered by the TTT program are: access to State Offices for counseling relative to becoming a certified

teacher and for placement assistance; participation in the job referral process via the Internet; opportunity to post resumes made available to school district recruiters; and use of the MENTOR connection to contact TTT participants who are teaching for hints about transitioning to teaching as a subsequent career.

More than 4,000 TTT participants have been hired in our nation's public school systems. This should exponentially grow with the eligibility of the Reserve Components. Will Troops to Teachers diminish the shortages mentioned in the opening paragraphs? With 33 percent of the TTT teachers from a minority group, 32 percent teaching math or science, 18 percent teaching special education, 24% working in inner-city schools, and 68% willing to teach in a rural community....it is a great start!

If you are interested in still serving your country and discovering a new and rewarding career in teaching access www.ProudToServeAgain.com for more information. The Troops to Teachers web site will provide you the latest updates on the program, resource links for program applicants, and important links to state-specific education sites.